

November is National Diabetes Awareness Month -

In Delaware, the prevalence of diabetes has almost doubled, from 4.9 percent in 1991 to 11.5 percent in 2015. More than 85,000 adults in Delaware have diabetes, affecting 15.1 percent of African Americans and 11 percent of Non-Hispanic Caucasian adults.

The Diabetes mortality/death rate has declined over the past two decades. However, the diabetes mortality rate for African-American Delawareans is more than twice the diabetes mortality rate for Caucasian Delawareans.

According to the [Delaware Behavioral Risk Factor Survey](#), just slightly more than half (51 percent) of all adults diagnosed with diabetes reported taking a course or class about how to manage diabetes.

In 2012, the American Diabetes Association estimated the total cost burden of diabetes for Delaware was \$860 million.

For more Delaware-specific information about diabetes, visit dhss.delaware.gov.

This website will help you understand diabetes and to determine if you or a loved one has it and what type it may be, as well as to provide information about how this serious, chronic condition can be prevented, treated and managed.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that one out of four people do not know they have diabetes.

How does diabetes affect you?

Diabetes, also known as hyperglycemia, affects the glucose that your body generates after breaking down the food you eat. Glucose is moved into your blood cells by insulin. When it enters the cells it is either used immediately as fuel for energy, or stored in the cell for later use. When a person has diabetes, there is a problem with insulin—either the body doesn't make enough insulin, or it can't use the insulin it does make very well. Consult with your doctor if you have diabetes and work together to monitor and control your blood glucose levels and A1C.

Health conditions that are caused by diabetes

Diabetes raises your chance of developing a number of diseases. Here are the top 6 to watch out for, and how to reduce your risk.

Cardiovascular disease is the leading cause of death for people who have diabetes. That's because high blood sugar can cause a gradual buildup of fatty deposits that clog and harden the walls of blood vessels. And when blood vessels are partially blocked or narrowed, it can lead to a [stroke or heart attack](#).

Diabetes is a leading cause of kidney failure. At least half of all people with diabetes may have signs of early kidney problems. [High blood pressure](#), or a family history of it, can raise your risk of chronic kidney disease

[Diabetes has been linked to cancer in some people](#)

Diabetes can often lead to nerve disorders called neuropathies. Diabetic neuropathy can give you symptoms of pain, numbness or tingling in your legs and toes, arms and fingers. Or you might have digestive complaints like nausea, indigestion or constipation.

Amputations

There are two reasons why diabetes can lead to amputations of your feet or legs. **Because of narrowed blood vessels, circulation to your lower body parts may not be top-notch (PAD).** That means cuts or sores on your feet or legs will have a tough time healing and can get worse instead of better. Second, if you have nerve damage from diabetes, you might not feel the pain of a foot problem. Sores that you don't notice can become infected and fester, leading to the need for amputation

Vision loss

Diabetes can cause blockages or abnormal growth of blood vessels in the retina, the part of the eye that reads images. Blood vessel changes in the retina can lead to vision problems, even blindness, cataracts or glaucoma, two other serious eye diseases.

Reduce Risk: it's critical not only that your blood sugar is kept in control, but that your blood pressure and cholesterol levels are healthy as well. "The key is, you have to be in control of your disease, and not let your disease control you". Get a full eye exam at least once a year. Give good care to your feet and cut your bad habits: Smoking and drinking alcohol can increase the likelihood that you'll develop diabetic neuropathy. If you smoke, Quit. Have regular urine test, increase your level of regular physical exercise and stick to a well-balanced, heart-healthy diet.

Improve your entire health and wellness